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CRITICISM OF CARELESS FULFILLMENT
OF FACTORY AGREEMENTS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Trinec, 6 May -- The great significance of factory agreements is that they obligate the factory managements and the factory councils to make every effort to fulfill the planned goals, and they specify all minor and major improvements and technical and organizational measures which the workers need for fulfilling the plan. In the majority of plants the significance of the agreements is understood, and the demands contained in them are actually met. There are, however, cases where the factory management and the factory council regard the factory agreement as a necessary evil which does not bind them in any way.

This is the case in the V. M. Molotov Ironworks in Trinec. Last year, the factory agreement lay on someone's desk for the entire year without anyone noticing it. As no one checked on it, the majority of its points, in both the factory and the workshop sections, were not fulfilled. This showed up understandably in the failure to fulfill production goals last year.

This year, the factory and workshop agreements are being checked, but results so far indicate that they are not being fulfilled. The most important items are still on paper only. A typical example is the workshop agreement concerning the blast furnaces, the most important operation of the Trinec Ironworks. The error was committed in drawing up the agreement, because the responsible workers were not designated, and in some cases time limits were not even included. Certain measures remained unfulfilled, even though most of them were taken over from the workshop agreement of the previous year. The fourth crane at the new ore heap was to have been ready by 1 January 1952, as demanded in last year's workshop agreement. But the crane is not in operation yet, although it is even more badly needed since a new blast furnace has been installed. The same situation exists in the case of the changes to be made in the coke grading equipment and in the reconstruction of the conveyor for blast furnace charges. None of these requirements have been fulfilled, although they were included in last year's agreement.

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A similar situation exists elsewhere. In Steel Mill I the demand that a socialist agreement be concluded with the transport section to do away with shortcomings in the supply of pig iron and scrap has not been met. As a result, the large amounts of time wasted have an unfavorable effect on plan fulfillment. The deadline for the conclusion of the socialist agreement was 20 January, but the representatives of Steel Mill I were unable to find any time in the whole first quarter of the year to talk to persons in the transport section.

In supervising workshop agreements, widespread irresponsibility is noticeable. The workshop council blames the operations director, he blames the investment department, and it blames orders from above. However, one look at the factory agreement shows that even those items which have nothing to do with investment are not being fulfilled. The planned shockworker courses for blast-furnace and rolling-mill operators have not been held, nor has the meeting of shockworkers and factory innovators at which they were to lecture on their experiences. In the first quarter 1952 there was to have been a health checkup of all employees. This has not been carried out. Nothing but statistical work has been done on another demand of the factory agreement, the program for reducing accidents. In checking on the agreement, the factory council and the factory management contented themselves with merely determining that the agreement had not been fulfilled, and specifying alternative deadlines.

At Trinec, another way of handling unfulfilled pledges was discovered. The factory management decided to cancel all pledges which they say are not fulfillable. But did they not know this at the time the agreements were being signed? They promised a great deal and now, when the workers are asking what has become of the promises, they choose the easy way: they announce that approved items are not fulfillable, and the matter is supposed to end there. For example, the workshop agreement for the blast furnaces, which was "repaired" in this manner, now contains less than one third of the original pledges. However, all the pledges were very important to assure uniform fulfillment of the plans without breakdowns, difficulties, and waste of time.

The factory council agrees with this, and this is the basic error. The factory agreement is to assure plan fulfillment. If the agreement is not fulfilled, the plan will not be fulfilled either, as is the case now. The job of the factory council is to demand realization of the provisions of the factory agreement and the workshop agreements in their full extent and by the original deadline.

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